

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 RSC-01 FEA-02 EB-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01

SS-20 NSF-04 DODE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03

SAM-01 PM-07 DRC-01 /159 W
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R 311754Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7587

USAEC GERMANTOWN

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 01439

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, TECH, UK

SUBJECT: ENERGY: PROSPECTIVE HMG NUCLEAR REACTOR
CHOICE

REF: (A) LONDON 1068, (B) KOUTS-KAUFMAN TELECON

1. AS ADDRESSEES AWARE, WE ARE CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE DELIBERATIONS IN PARLIAMENT, THE PRESS AND WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE CENTRAL ELECTRICITY GENERATING BOARD'S (CEGB) DESIRE TO PURCHASE AMERICAN LWR TECHNOLOGY INSTEAD OF BRITISH GAS COOLED REACTORS TO LESSEN THE CEGB'S DEPENDENCE ON FOSSIL FUELS BY 1980. RECENT TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE COMMONS SELECT COMMITTEE HAS KEPT ISSUE OF SAFETY OF U.S. LWR'S ALIVE IN PRESS, AND RAISED QUESTION AS TO LINE WE SHOULD FOLLOW. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE ARE SEEKING VIEWS OF MAIN PROPONENTS OF U.S. TECHNOLOGY, AND WILL REPORT THEM AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE. SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT WILL BE ISSUED WEEK OF FEBRUARY 4 WITH HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN TWO WEEKS THEREAFTER.

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2. LORD ALDINGTON, CHAIRMAN OF NATIONAL NUCLEAR COMPANY (NNC) HAS CONVEYED MESSAGE TO EMBASSY THROUGH

STEWART (NNC) THAT BEST COURSE OF ACTION AT PRESENT IS FOR USAEC TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE FACTUAL DATA AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE TO INTERESTED HMG, CEGB AND NNC OFFICIALS. LORD ALDINGTON DOES NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO MAKE LWR SAFETY PRESENTATION DIRECTLY WITH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY LORD CARRINGTON OR OTHER SENIOR DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICIALS.

3. STEWART BELIEVES FIPSION BY CARRINGTON WILL BE MADE LATE FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH IF NO GENERAL ELECTION IS CALLED. IN EVENT OF ELECTION, DECISION PROBABLY WILL BE DELAYED FOR INDETERMINATE PERIOD.

4. STEWART CONFIRMS THAT NNC-GENERAL ATOMICS (GGA) TALKS WENT WELL. HE NOTES DISCUSSION WITH GGA CONCENTRATED ON LONGER TERM DEVELOPMENT OF HTR LINKS, NOT IMMEDIATE CEGB REACTOR CHOICE PROBLEM. COMMENT: GGA HAS ESTABLISHED LONDON OFFICE IN SHELL CENTRE AND, ASSUMING HMG DECISION TURNS OUT TO BE AGAINST LWR, UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD BE READY TO MOVE INTO VACUUM LEFT BY WESTINGHOUSE AND GE.

5. EMBASSY STILL HAS NOT RECEIVED COPIES OF DECEMBER 28, 1973, RULING OF USAEC ON ECCS, DOCKET NO. RM 50-1. PLEASE SEND SOONEST VIA DEPARTMENT POUCH. WE ALSO WOULD APPRECIATE LATEST INFORMATION ON POWER REACTOR DE-RATINGS IN U.S. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY BY STEWART.

ANNENBERG

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NNN

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